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| 1 | IN THE SUPREME COURT | OF THE UNITED STATES | |
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| 2 | | x | |
| 3 | BARION PERRY, | : | |
| 4 | Petitioner | : No. 10-8974 | |
| 5 | v. | : | |
| 6 | NEW HAMPSHIRE | : | |
| 7 | | x | |
| 8 | Washi | ngton, D.C. | |
| 9 | Wedne | sday, November 2, 2011 | |
| 10 | | | |
| 11 | The above-enti | tled matter came on for oral | |
| 12 | argument before the Supreme Court of the United States | | |
| 13 | at 10:02 a.m. | | |
| 14 | APPEARANCES: | | |
| 15 | RICHARD GUERRIERO, ESQ., Concord, New Hampshire; on | | |
| 16 | behalf of Petitioner. | | |
| 17 | MICHAEL A. DELANEY, ESQ., Attorney General, Concord, New | | |
| 18 | Hampshire; on behalf of Respondent. | | |
| 19 | NICOLE A. SAHARSKY, ESQ., Assistant to the Solicitor | | |
| 20 | General, Department of Ju | stice, Washington, D.C.; for | |
| 21 | United States, as amicus | curiae, supporting | |
| 22 | Respondent. | | |
| 23 | | | |
| 24 | | | |
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| 1 | PROCEEDINGS |
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| 2 | (10:02 a.m.) |
| 3 | CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument |
| 4 | first today in Case 10-8974, Perry v. New Hampshire. |
| 5 | Mr. Guerriero. |
| 6 | ORAL ARGUMENT OF RICHARD GUERRIERO |
| 7 | ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER |
| 8 | MR. GUERRIERO: Mr. Chief Justice, and may |
| 9 | it please the Court: |
| 10 | An eyewitness identification made under a |
| 11 | suggestive influence presents a unique danger of |
| 12 | misidentification and a miscarriage of justice. It is |
| 13 | that danger of misidentification which implicates due |
| 14 | process and requires an evaluation of the reliability of |
| 15 | the identification. The constitutional |
| 16 | JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counselor, does your |
| 17 | position depend on police involvement at all? |
| 18 | MR. GUERRIERO: No, Your Honor. |
| 19 | JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'm if a private |
| 20 | investigator shows a picture or that has no |
| 21 | connection to the police, a company's investigator? |
| 22 | MR. GUERRIERO: What I suggest |
| 23 | JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Or the news media |
| 24 | publishes a picture of someone that it thinks |
| 25 | MR. GUERRIERO: I have a two-part answer to |

- 1 that. The -- the significance of the suggested
- 2 influence is how it affects reliability. Most of the
- 3 time that influence, the defense will allege, is from
- 4 some police activity, and rightly so because they are
- 5 mostly involved and rightly so because police suspicion
- 6 is the kind of influence that would direct the witness's
- 7 attention and say that's the man.
- 8 But it's not necessarily required, and in
- 9 fact one of the Federal court of appeal cases, Dunnigan
- 10 v. Keane, involved exactly that, a private investigator,
- 11 where a private investigator from a bank showed
- 12 surveillance photos to the witness and then later the
- 13 witnesses made an ID.
- 14 JUSTICE SCALIA: Mr. Guerriero, if it's
- 15 not -- if it's not limited to suggestive circumstances
- 16 created by the police, why is unreliable eyewitness
- 17 identification any different from unreliable anything
- 18 else? So shouldn't we look at every instance of
- 19 evidence introduced in criminal cases to see if it was
- 20 reliable or not?
- 21 MR. GUERRIERO: No, Your Honor. I suggest
- 22 that eyewitness identification evidence is unique, and I
- 23 think that this Court recognized that in Wade and in the
- 24 subsequent cases, in fact described it at that time as
- 25 probably the leading cause of miscarriages of justice.

- 1 And in fact experience with the DNA exonerations that
- 2 we've seen recently in the last 10 or 15 years have
- 3 shown that.
- 4 JUSTICE GINSBURG: So at least for all
- 5 eyewitness testimony, there would have to be some
- 6 pretesting for reliability? Is that -- is that your
- 7 contention?
- 8 MR. GUERRIERO: No, Your Honor, and I don't
- 9 think that's exactly what the Court said in Wade and the
- 10 subsequent cases. It's the combination of eyewitness
- 11 identification testimony plus the suggestive influence
- 12 which makes -- which brings it to sort of the height of
- 13 suspicion and creates the greatest risk.
- 14 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And in this case, in
- 15 which category do you place the eyewitness testimony?
- 16 Is it police suggestion, or is it suggestive but not
- 17 through any manipulation on the police's part?
- 18 MR. GUERRIERO: In our case, we do not
- 19 allege any manipulation or intentional orchestration by
- 20 the police. But our position is that it appeared to the
- 21 witness, to Ms. Blandon, that Mr. Perry was in fact a
- 22 suspect, and she looked down and there was that
- 23 suspicion.
- Now, if we had been able to have our due
- 25 process claim heard, the judge may or may not have

- 1 agreed that that was suggestive and created a risk.
- 2 But --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Do you think that our cases
- 4 which exclude or -- or require reversal when there is
- 5 eyewitness testimony impaired by the police, you think
- 6 that's really limited to eyewitness testimony? Suppose
- 7 the police created suggestiveness in another category of
- 8 evidence. Let's say -- let's say voice evidence, that
- 9 the killer had left a message on the -- on the phone and
- 10 the police in some manner create suggestiveness that
- 11 causes a witness to identify that as the voice of the
- 12 killer. You really think that we would say, well, this
- is not eyewitness testimony; eyewitness testimony
- 14 creates a special risk? Don't you think that we would
- 15 say whenever the police render evidence unreliable it --
- 16 it should be excluded?
- 17 MR. GUERRIERO: I think that may be a
- 18 separate due process claim. For example, if the
- 19 police --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Exactly. But -- but
- 21 that -- that impairs your -- your argument, because if
- 22 we accept your argument for eyewitness we should
- 23 similarly accept it for everything else. There is
- 24 nothing special about eyewitness.
- MR. GUERRIERO: I -- I disagree, Your Honor.

- 1 I think that what the Court has said is that there is
- 2 something special about eyewitness identification
- 3 testimony.
- 4 JUSTICE SCALIA: I'm saying we don't mean
- 5 it.
- 6 (Laughter.)
- 7 MR. GUERRIERO: Well --
- 8 JUSTICE SCALIA: I'm saying that it's
- 9 unbelievable that if the -- if the police created
- 10 testimony, not eyewitness testimony but testimony that
- 11 was unreliable because of police suggestiveness, I think
- 12 we would throw that out as well. Don't you think so?
- MR. GUERRIERO: I -- well, I think that in
- 14 any case, and I think the Court has said this in other
- 15 circumstances, that in any case a defendant could raise
- 16 a due process claim and say, either because of the way
- 17 the prosecution handled the evidence or because of the
- 18 -- the combination of rulings on evidence, that there
- 19 was a due process violation that implicated fundamental
- 20 fairness.
- 21 JUSTICE KENNEDY: In this case, suppose that
- 22 the police talked to this -- to the lady that was in the
- 23 -- in the apartment and saw the thing out the window and
- 24 said, we -- we think we've solved this case but you
- 25 can't look at this man. We don't want to you look at

- 1 this man. Don't tell us. We're not going to let you
- 2 look out that window. It seems to me that the defendant
- 3 might have a due process argument that the police
- 4 interfered, that she couldn't say right when he was
- 5 there, that's not the man.
- I don't know what you want the police to do
- 7 in this case. It seems to me it would have been, A,
- 8 risking this argument from the defendant, and B,
- 9 improper police conduct, not to ask the woman is this
- 10 the man?
- 11 MR. GUERRIERO: I disagree, Your Honor. If
- 12 the police wanted to ask her to make an identification,
- 13 they could have done a line-up procedure or a photo
- 14 line-up procedure fairly promptly that would be distinct
- 15 from and much more fair than the show-up at the scene.
- 16 And there was no emergency or exigency here that would
- 17 require a show-up.
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: What about -- what about
- 19 unreliable eyewitness testimony in favor of the
- 20 defendant? Let's assume the same suggestiveness that
- 21 causes you to exclude it when it's been introduced by
- 22 the prosecution, but here it's being introduced by the
- 23 defendant to show that it was somebody else, okay? Is
- 24 that going to be excluded?
- MR. GUERRIERO: It may be excluded under the

- 1 rules of evidence, but the Due Process Clause doesn't --
- 2 JUSTICE SCALIA: Do you think it should be
- 3 excluded under the rules of evidence? If you say it's
- 4 so unreliable -- this is a one-way door?
- 5 MR. GUERRIERO: The Due Process Clause --
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: All of the evidence that --
- 7 that causes the defendant to be convicted is excluded,
- 8 but -- but any -- any evidence -- any evidence on the
- 9 other side is not?
- 10 MR. GUERRIERO: Well, the defendant is
- 11 obviously not trying to deprive the State of its liberty
- in the same way that the State is trying to deprive the
- 13 defendant of his liberty at trial, so the Due Process
- 14 Clause would not apply in that sense. That's not to say
- 15 that there wouldn't be evidentiary grounds for the State
- 16 to raise that objection.
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, you see, when -- when
- 18 it's the State that causes the unreliability, I can see
- 19 why it is a -- a ground that can be invoked only by the
- 20 defendant. But when you come up with a theory that it
- 21 doesn't matter whether the State was the cause or not, I
- 22 don't know why it wouldn't work both ways, that the
- 23 evidence is inherently unreliable and it ought to be
- 24 excluded whether it helps the defendant or hurts the
- 25 defendant.

- 1 MR. GUERRIERO: It -- it --
- 2 JUSTICE SCALIA: Once -- once you take the
- 3 State out of the mix there is no reason to limit it to
- 4 the -- to the defendant.
- 5 JUSTICE GINSBURG: You -- you answered that
- 6 due process works only in favor of the defendant.
- 7 MR. GUERRIERO: That's right.
- 8 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Not in favor of the
- 9 State.
- 10 MR. GUERRIERO: That's right.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: And that is your only --
- 12 your only distinction. You are saying that this is a
- one -- one-way --
- MR. GUERRIERO: That's right, Justice
- 15 Ginsburg.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- street.
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well --
- 18 JUSTICE ALITO: I take it from your -- I
- 19 take it from your answers that simple unreliability is
- 20 not enough. If there's testimony --
- MR. GUERRIERO: That's right.
- JUSTICE ALITO: -- eyewitness testimony that
- 23 seems of very dubious unreliability, that cannot be
- 24 excluded.
- MR. GUERRIERO: That's right. I --

- 1 JUSTICE ALITO: Something more is needed.
- 2 MR. GUERRIERO: That's right, and I might
- 3 even go further.
- 4 JUSTICE ALITO: Something more is needed;
- 5 suggestiveness is needed.
- 6 MR. GUERRIERO: That's right.
- 7 JUSTICE ALITO: But suggestiveness doesn't
- 8 require any police involvement? Is that right?
- 9 MR. GUERRIERO: That's right.
- 10 JUSTICE ALITO: Can you just define what you
- 11 mean by suggestiveness?
- MR. GUERRIERO: Well, I think the court has
- 13 given examples. If it's effectively a show-up or a
- 14 show-up. The example in Foster involved a couple of
- 15 different kinds of suggestiveness. One was where the
- 16 police did a line-up where the defendant was the only
- 17 common person.
- 18 JUSTICE ALITO: Yes, but those are all
- 19 situations where the police is involved, the police are
- 20 involved.
- MR. GUERRIERO: Right. The nonpolice
- 22 examples of suggestiveness that rise to the due process
- 23 level are mostly going to be show-ups. The example in
- 24 Dunnigan v. Keane was a private investigator showing,
- 25 from the bank, that they had an ATM card that was stolen

- 1 from the person.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, what if you have
- 3 cross-racial identification? Would that qualify on the
- 4 ground that studies have shown that those may be less
- 5 reliable.
- 6 MR. GUERRIERO: That may be a separate
- 7 grounds to move for a jury instruction or for an expert.
- 8 I'm not sure that -- we certainly don't argue here and
- 9 it wasn't argued below that that's a separate due
- 10 process ground.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Why not? I mean, that's
- 12 the point. Why not? What about an eyewitness
- identification from 200 yards? You know, normally you'd
- leave it to the jury and the jury would say that's very
- 15 unlikely. But you want to say it has to be excluded and
- 16 if it's not you retry the person. What is magic about
- 17 suggestiveness as opposed to all of the other matters
- 18 that could cause eyewitness identification to be wrong?
- 19 MR. GUERRIERO: Two answers to that, Your
- 20 Honor. First, it's not that these things are always
- 21 excluded, and in fact the Court has set a very high bar.
- 22 I mean, the standard is this evidence is excluded only
- 23 if it's very substantially likely to lead to a
- 24 misidentification. So --
- JUSTICE ALITO: I understand that, but I

- 1 need to know what you mean by suggestiveness. What does
- 2 that mean? Can you just give me a definition of it?
- MR. GUERRIERO: It is conduct or
- 4 circumstances that point -- that tell the witness that's
- 5 the man. And most commonly it would be showing a single
- 6 photograph or presenting the person as a suspect or it
- 7 appearing, as in this case, that the -- the defendant
- 8 was a suspect. And that's essentially how the Court has
- 9 defined it, as conduct that says that's the man.
- 10 So there may be some things that the defense
- 11 argues that are suggestive and the trial court looks at
- 12 it and says, you know, that's a very slight suggestion.
- 13 You say he is the only guy in the line-up with a
- 14 mustache. I don't even -- I'm not going any further. I
- 15 don't think that's sufficient suggestion. That doesn't
- 16 qualify as saying that's the man.
- 17 JUSTICE KAGAN: But just to repeat Justice
- 18 Scalia's question, once you're not talking about police
- 19 suggestiveness, once you're talking about suggestiveness
- 20 that arises from non-State conduct, why should we be
- 21 focused on suggestiveness as opposed to any other cause
- 22 of unreliability?
- MR. GUERRIERO: Well, because that's what --
- 24 my first reason is that that's what the Court focused on
- 25 in Wade as the main danger.

- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, the Court was focusing
 on police suggestiveness. That's the context of all our
 cases. Now, you might say, well, look, there is a
- 4 bigger problem and the bigger problem is the
- 5 unreliability of identifications generally, but that
- 6 doesn't relate to suggestiveness per se.
- 7 MR. GUERRIERO: Well, I think our position
- 8 is in between there. We are not saying that there is a
- 9 due process right to have eyewitness evidence excluded
- 10 generally without some suggestiveness. What we are
- 11 saying is that if the suggestion comes from a nonpolice
- 12 source or if it, as in this case, involved the police
- 13 but their involvement was unintentional, it's just
- 14 accidental, that that suggestiveness should still be
- 15 considered because --
- JUSTICE ALITO: What does that mean?
- 17 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Do you distinguish -- do
- 18 you distinguish the husband's situation? He was an
- 19 eyewitness too, but there was a motion to suppress her
- 20 testimony. Is that an example where there is an
- 21 eyewitness testimony but no suggestiveness? Why didn't
- you move to suppress the husband's statement?
- MR. GUERRIERO: Trial counsel simply did not
- 24 move to suppress that testimony. I don't have a good
- 25 explanation and, to be frank, I would have filed the

- 1 motion to suppress his testimony.
- 2 JUSTICE GINSBURG: So you'd put them both in
- 3 the same category?
- 4 MR. GUERRIERO: I would have.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Why isn't it -- this
- 6 may be -- just again following up on Justice Alito's
- 7 question, but there is always a degree of
- 8 suggestiveness. It's not like the person is picked
- 9 randomly off the street and saying, you know, do you
- 10 know this person? It's in the context of an
- 11 investigation. The person has some contact with it. So
- 12 there is always some suggestiveness that, well, this
- 13 person might have something to do with what went on.
- 14 MR. GUERRIERO: That's right. And if it
- 15 rises to a level of what the Court has given as examples
- 16 of a show-up or the same defendant appearing in a
- 17 line-up or something else that says that's the man, then
- 18 that raises a red flag. And it's not a --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But whenever --
- 20 whenever the witness is asked, at least there is a
- 21 suggestion that this might be the man. And I don't know
- 22 why you would think that's any greater than this is the
- 23 man. The police don't come up usually and say, this is
- 24 the person that we think did it; is that who you saw?
- 25 They say, did you see this guy?

- 1 MR. GUERRIERO: Actually, I disagree with
- 2 that aspect of your question, Your Honor. And in fact I
- 3 think the proper police procedure in certainly the
- 4 police departments that I'm familiar with will instruct
- 5 the witness that, do not assume that anyone that we
- 6 think is a suspect is in this line-up. And that's in
- 7 the standard witness instructions, and they may even do
- 8 multiple line-ups where they say, okay, we are going to
- 9 show you three sets of eight and the suspect -- or there
- 10 may or may not be a suspect in any of them. We just
- 11 want you to look at this set and see if anyone --
- 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well what about a
- 13 situation like the one we had here, where you're not
- 14 talking about a line-up.
- MR. GUERRIERO: That's right.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But you're talking
- 17 about the scene of a crime, and the police says, do you
- 18 know this person, did you see this person, or anything
- 19 else? That in itself, any type of identification in the
- 20 course of an investigation, I think you would have to
- 21 say is suggestive, because the person is not picked up
- 22 randomly.
- 23 MR. GUERRIERO: It is, but the key is that
- 24 it's not the suggestion that results in exclusion. It's
- 25 the suggestion that raises the red flag that allows the

- 1 defendant to say, would the trial court please evaluate
- 2 this according to the standards.
- 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So this is -- again,
- 4 this is just following up, I quess. But I remember in
- 5 law school one of the things in criminal law, the
- 6 professor says, all right, everybody be quiet. And then
- 7 a certain amount of time goes by and then he starts
- 8 asking people, well, how much time went by? And
- 9 people -- some people say 4 minutes, some people say,
- 10 you know, 1 minute. And it turns out, if I'm
- 11 remembering correctly, to be a lot shorter than most
- 12 people think.
- So that's at least, the point that was
- 14 trying to be made anyway, at least as unreliable as
- 15 eyewitness testimony. So your argument would have to
- 16 cover that, wouldn't it?
- 17 MR. GUERRIERO: I --
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You know, how long
- 19 were you there before this individual came into the
- 20 shop? The person says, I was there for 5 minutes, and
- 21 that ruins the person's alibi, when it turns out, you
- 22 know, study after study would say it really was 45
- 23 seconds or 1 minute.
- 24 MR. GUERRIERO: I think it's important to
- 25 look back at what the Court said in Wade and in fact how

- 1 what the Court said in Wade has been borne out. Of
- 2 course, there is aspects of unreliability to any kind of
- 3 evidence. Somebody could come and claim that there is
- 4 issues with false confessions or issues with forensic
- 5 evidence. I think last term somebody made a claim --
- 6 tried to assert a claim regarding DNA evidence that was
- 7 akin to an eyewitness identification claim.
- 8 But the point is that this kind of evidence
- 9 was singled out by the Court and recognized as having
- 10 particular dangers, and it's been borne out by the
- 11 studies, not psychological --
- 12 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But again, that was in the
- 13 context of procedures that the police had instituted.
- MR. GUERRIERO: It may be that --
- 15 JUSTICE KENNEDY: And your -- and your
- 16 rationale goes much beyond it. In a way you're
- 17 infringing on the province of the jury. I don't usually
- 18 like to reminisce, but there was a case I had where a
- 19 prosecution witness was very, very certain, all too
- 20 certain, and I said: Do you ever take your wife out to
- 21 dinner or go out to dinner with friends? And he said:
- 22 Oh, yes. I said: Has it ever happened to you that
- 23 midway in the meal you say, is that our waiter, and
- 24 you've seen -- the waiter has brought you the menu, he
- 25 has taken your order, he has brought your food, and you

- 1 were under no stress at the time.
- 2 MR. GUERRIERO: Right.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: And there was good light.
- 4 So you teach the jury this way. And you're
- 5 just -- you're just usurping the province of the jury,
- 6 it seems.
- 7 MR. GUERRIERO: I don't think so, Your
- 8 Honor. I mean, I think what this Court has said is that
- 9 this is a special category of evidence that has to be
- 10 red-flagged by or can be red-flagged by the defense for
- 11 the trial judge to look at it and say --
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: What is --
- MR. GUERRIERO: -- on a case by -- I'm
- 14 sorry.
- 15 JUSTICE BREYER: Go ahead. You were saying
- on a case -- all you want to do is red-flag it for the
- 17 judge.
- 18 MR. GUERRIERO: And then the trial judge
- 19 would look at it and in the rare case where he says it's
- 20 very substantially likely, which we agree is a high
- 21 standard --
- JUSTICE BREYER: All right. Now, how does
- 23 that differ from what exists in I think every State and
- 24 certainly in the Federal Rules in Rule 403? The judge
- 25 may exclude evidence if its relevance is outweighed by

- 1 its prejudice or misleading the jury. So why, in any
- 2 instance where you think that this statement about to
- 3 come in is unreliable for various reasons, you say:
- 4 Judge, will you please look please look at Rule 403; I
- 5 have some experts over here and whatever else you want
- 6 that would show that this is misleading to the jury for
- 7 all the reasons you have said in your brief, right.
- 8 So -- so since that is already the law and
- 9 it does apply to every piece of evidence, including all
- 10 the things we've been talking about, what is it that you
- 11 want to change?
- MR. GUERRIERO: Well, to answer the first
- 13 part of your question, what's different about this
- 14 evidence is that --
- 15 JUSTICE BREYER: I didn't say what's
- 16 different about it. I'm not looking for a difference.
- 17 I'm looking -- I'm saying they are all the same. And
- 18 indeed we do what you want right now. It's called Rule
- 19 403 in the Federal system. What I'm asking you is what
- 20 is it you want done, since all you want is the judge to
- 21 look at it carefully, that is not done at this moment?
- MR. GUERRIERO: The analysis under 403,
- 23 which New Hampshire of course has as well, will accord a
- 24 certain weight and value to the opportunity of counsel
- 25 to cross-examine the witness and to make arguments to

- 1 the jury. And unlike any other kind of evidence, this
- 2 Court has said, precious though it is, the right of
- 3 cross-examination does not always --
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, the judges don't, I'm
- 5 sure -- I'm not 100 percent sure, you'd have to ask a
- 6 trial judge. But I am sure there are instances where
- 7 judges say under Rule 403: I conclude it is misleading
- 8 and it is prejudicial and it can't be made up for,
- 9 therefore I exclude it.
- 10 All right, that happens. Now, since that's
- 11 what you want the judge to do, I repeat my question:
- 12 What is the difference between what you're asking for
- 13 and what already exists in the law? •
- MR. GUERRIERO: The difference --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Unless -- well, go ahead.
- MR. GUERRIERO: I'm sorry.
- 17 The difference is that under a normal 403
- 18 analysis, when I told the judge, when I said she never
- 19 could describe his face, she couldn't even say what
- 20 clothes he was wearing, the judge will respond to me and
- 21 say, that's fine. That's all great fodder for
- 22 cross-examination. But the difference with this kind of
- 23 evidence is that it's not just ---
- 24 JUSTICE BREYER: Whoa, wait. Stop you
- 25 there, because now what you seem to be saying is it

- 1 isn't the case that you simply want the judge to look at
- 2 this with care, rather you want the judge to change her
- 3 result. You want sometimes this to be excluded where
- 4 under 403 it is sometimes not excluded. Right. Now, I
- 5 ask -- if that's what you want, that's a different
- 6 matter. That's a substantive standard. And so you're
- 7 proposing a different substantive standard and I want to
- 8 know what it is.
- 9 MR. GUERRIERO: It's -- it's the standard
- 10 that this Court has established, if it's reasonably --
- 11 reasonably likely or substantially likely to lead to a
- 12 risk of misidentification at trial, very substantially
- 13 likely.
- 14 JUSTICE ALITO: That would be really a great
- 15 change from the way trials are now conducted, wouldn't
- 16 it. Let me give you this example. A victim is raped
- 17 and the victim doesn't really have a very good
- 18 opportunity to see the perpetrator. It's dark, the
- 19 person has a mask and so forth. A couple of weeks go by
- 20 and the victim reads on article in the paper that says
- 21 so-and-so has been arrested for a rape in another part
- 22 of the city. There is a picture of that person in the
- 23 paper and the victim says, that's the person who raped
- 24 me.
- Now, you want to make it possible for the

- 1 judge to say that victim may not testify and identify
- 2 the person that that person -- that the victim says was
- 3 the perpetrator of the rape, on the ground that the
- 4 newspaper picture was suggestive, even though there
- 5 wasn't any police involvement and when you look at all
- 6 the circumstances, the identification is unreliable.
- 7 Now, maybe that's a good system, but that is
- 8 a drastic change, is it not, from the way criminal
- 9 trials are now conducted?
- MR. GUERRIERO: Well, it's certainly not the
- 11 change from what the law is in the Federal circuits that
- 12 we cited. And I would also point out that in one of the
- 13 -- .
- 14 JUSTICE ALITO: Do you know of cases like
- 15 that in which the judge has said that eyewitness
- 16 identification cannot come in?
- MR. GUERRIERO: In Thigpen v. Cory, which is
- 18 a Sixth Circuit case, the court said -- in fact they
- 19 specifically used the phrase "police machinations" --
- 20 that this did not arise from police machinations. It
- 21 was basically happenstance in that case that the witness
- 22 was -- the witness identified the defendant and it was
- 23 excluded as unreliable.
- 24 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But we've said in our
- 25 case, Neil v. Biggers -- that was a rape case and we

- 1 allowed it. We allowed the eyewitness.
- 2 MR. GUERRIERO: Well -- and I think the
- 3 Court said in all its cases, and in particular in
- 4 Simmons, that each case --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: And, in fact we said that
- 6 it was unnecessarily suggestive, but that it was still
- 7 reliable.
- 8 MR. GUERRIERO: And it may be. I mean, it
- 9 may -- you could have an extremely -- you could have a
- 10 -- the police could do a show-up intending to produce an
- 11 ID, but if the witness got a very good look at the
- 12 person, was calm, was maybe a police officer like in
- 13 Brathwaite and the court said, we don't care how
- 14 deliberate this -- and even if there is manipulation, we
- 15 don't care how much of that there is, we find it's
- 16 reliable here.
- 17 JUSTICE KAGAN: Suppose that there was some
- 18 other category of testimony which proved even more
- 19 unreliable than the category that you're talking about.
- 20 Let's say that it turned out study after study after
- 21 study that jailhouse informants lie. And so the
- 22 testimony of jailhouse informants is likely to be just
- 23 completely unreliable, to, you know, double as much as
- 24 eyewitness testimony. Same rule for that?
- MR. GUERRIERO: I think it would be a very

- 1 high burden for the defense to meet there. But if the
- 2 finding was that there are times that a witness, that --
- 3 like in the eyewitness situation, where the witness
- 4 truly believes that they are identifying the right
- 5 person, but they are actually not and it could result in
- 6 a miscarriage of justice, then I do believe fundamental
- 7 fairness requires the Court to say due process doesn't
- 8 allow that evidence.
- 9 JUSTICE KAGAN: Okay. Well, now we are
- 10 talking about, now we are setting up a standard that
- 11 applies outside eyewitness testimony. It's just
- 12 testimony that we find to be -- categories of testimony
- 13 that we find to be extremely unreliable will be subject
- 14 to this new due process red flag. Is that right?
- MR. GUERRIERO: Well, I don't think so, Your
- 16 Honor. But more for a factual reason in that the Court
- 17 said in 1967 that this is the leading cause of
- 18 miscarriage of justice. The studies and -- not just
- 19 studies, but the transcripts and records of actual
- 20 trials.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: No, I understand you have
- 22 very good empirical evidence which should lead us all to
- 23 wonder about the reliability of eyewitness testimony.
- 24 I'm just suggesting that eyewitness testimony is not the
- only kind of testimony which people can do studies on

- 1 and find that it's more unreliable than you would think.
- 2 MR. GUERRIERO: Well, maybe if somebody else
- 3 came along and said, we've done a study and we find this
- 4 kind of evidence, that in 75 percent of the wrongful
- 5 convictions, this evidence contributed to the
- 6 miscarriage of justice, then I would think the Court
- 7 should take a look at that. But I don't think any other
- 8 evidence matches that.
- 9 JUSTICE GINSBURG: What about all the other
- 10 safeguards that you have? You can ask the judge to tell
- 11 the jury: Be careful; eyewitness testimony is often
- 12 unreliable. You can point that out in
- 13 cross-examination.
- MR. GUERRIERO: Yes.
- 15 JUSTICE GINSBURG: All those questions. You
- 16 can say something about it in your summation to the
- 17 jury. And as Justice Breyer brought up, you have the
- 18 evidence rule that says if prejudicial value outweighs
- 19 probative value that the judge can say, I'm not going to
- 20 let it in. Why aren't all those safequards enough?
- 21 MR. GUERRIERO: If all of those safequards
- 22 were enough, even when the police made --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, leaving aside the
- 24 police, because there -- there is an interest in
- 25 deterrence, in deterring the police from manipulating

- 1 evidence.
- 2 MR. GUERRIERO: I don't think deterrence is
- 3 the primary basis of the court's cases, Your Honor,
- 4 because the Court has said that if it proves to be
- 5 reliable, no matter how manipulative the police were,
- 6 this evidence comes in. So the basis of the rule is not
- 7 primarily determined -- deterrence; it's the risk of an
- 8 unfair trial and the risk of a miscarriage of justice.
- 9 JUSTICE GINSBURG: There is a difference
- 10 between suggestive and suggested by the police.
- 11 MR. GUERRIERO: I'm sorry, Your Honor, I --
- 12 JUSTICE GINSBURG: If the suggestion comes
- 13 from the police, then the evidence will be excluded. If
- 14 the suggestion comes from someplace else, unless we
- 15 change the rule --
- 16 MR. GUERRIERO: Well I think that that's
- 17 a --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- it would be admitted.
- 19 MR. GUERRIERO: I mean, I think that that's
- 20 a -- that's a tricky issue to consider, because
- 21 suggestion coming from the police is different from
- 22 manipulation. And if -- if the rule is unintended
- 23 suggestion from the police implicates due process, then
- 24 Perry was entitled to a due process analysis, because
- 25 the unintended suggestion here was apparent police

- 1 suspicion as he stood there.
- 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- 3 MR. GUERRIERO: Thank you.
- 4 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: General Delaney.
- 5 ORAL ARGUMENT OF MICHAEL A. DELANEY
- 6 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
- 7 MR. DELANEY: Mr. Chief Justice and may it
- 8 please the Court:
- 9 An eyewitness identification implicates due
- 10 process concerns only when the police arrange a
- 11 confrontation to elicit a witness's identification of a
- 12 suspect and use unnecessarily suggestive techniques that
- 13 skew the fact-finding process. The central concern --
- 14 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Now we've changed the
- 15 language of Wade when it talks about intentional or
- 16 unintentional. And you're suggesting that police
- 17 manipulation always has to be intentionally suggestive?
- 18 MR. DELANEY: I'm not --
- 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Even if the policeman
- 20 tells you he wasn't really thinking or focusing on a
- 21 distinguishing characteristic in the line-up?
- MR. DELANEY: That may play a role, Justice
- 23 Sotomayor, but only in a limited sense, and not in the
- 24 way the Petitioner is suggesting we look at
- 25 unintentional conduct. First, for the due process

- 1 inquiry to trigger, there must be an arranged
- 2 confrontation of a suspect and a witness by the police.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Could you tell me what
- 4 you think would have happened here? there was a reason
- 5 the police asked this defendant to stay put. They
- 6 didn't want him to leave the scene, correct?
- 7 MR. DELANEY: That -- that's correct.
- 9 think Justice Kennedy hit the nail on the head. My
- 10 suspicion is that at some point they would have asked
- 11 the witnesses in the building and engaged in a show-up.
- 12 What's so different between intentionally doing the
- 13 show-up and holding the defendant in the back yard
- 14 standing there next to a police officer, so that anyone
- 15 who wants to, like this woman, who wants to find the
- 16 quy, can just point to that one? What's the difference?
- 17 MR. DELANEY: The difference in this case is
- 18 the role that the police played in bringing about
- 19 potential suggestion under your hypothetical. What the
- 20 Due Process Clause is concerned about is the role of the
- 21 police in essentially stacking the deck, putting their
- 22 thumb on the scale and skewing the fact-finding process.
- 23 It goes to the intent of the process --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No. I mean, the way not
- 25 to skew it was to put him in the police car and just let

- 1 him sit there in the dark. So they intentionally made
- 2 him wait at the scene of the crime.
- 3
 I'm not talking about whether this was
- 4 necessary or unnecessary, because I think that a
- 5 perfectly good argument could be made that the police
- 6 acted reasonably and necessarily; all right? It makes
- 7 no sense to move a defendant that far from the scene of
- 8 a crime if you're not sure he is the one who committed
- 9 the crime, he or she.
- 10 But I'm -- I'm going to the question of how
- 11 do we define, if we write this opinion, manipulation
- 12 without getting into a mens rea type analysis and adding
- 13 yet another layer to Biggers.
- MR. DELANEY: Well, first, I don't think you
- 15 need to go there in this case. You can simply say that,
- 16 based on the factual findings of the State court, the
- 17 police did not induce any type of show-up --
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: But doesn't -- we face that
- 19 problem anyway, even if we -- whether or not we decide
- 20 in this case that it doesn't matter that the police
- 21 manipulated it, we are always going to have the problem
- of when has there been police manipulation; right?
- MR. DELANEY: That's correct.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: I mean, that -- that's not
- 25 a creation of this -- of this case.

- 1 MR. DELANEY: That's correct.
- 2 JUSTICE SCALIA: And I -- I would guess that
- 3 in the case you're talking about, just telling the
- 4 person to stay where he is, is not -- now, it would be
- 5 different if -- if the defendant was -- was caught two
- 6 blocks away and the police bring him back to the scene
- 7 of the crime and make him stand there so that the woman
- 8 can see him from the window. That's quite different.
- 9 MR. DELANEY: It is quite different. And
- 10 Stovall tells us that the test is an objective one. We
- 11 look at the totality of the circumstances to determine
- 12 whether there has been suggestive conduct.
- Now, in that regard --
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: When you say
- 15 that's -- when you say that's different, you're not --
- 16 you're not suggesting that that would be suggestive, are
- 17 you?
- MR. DELANEY: No, I'm not.
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Because presumably,
- 20 that's the same argument -- that's for the jury and the
- 21 counsel. They can say during cross-examination the guy
- 22 was two blocks away, you know, and -- and wasn't it only
- 23 because the police brought him back that you -- all of
- 24 that. I don't see what difference it makes in terms of
- 25 whether you have a suppression hearing before the trial.

- 1 MR. DELANEY: That's correct, Mr. Chief
- 2 Justice. It would not make a difference in that regard.
- 3 And on the facts of this case, we do have clear factual
- 4 finding that this police officer in no way -- in no way
- 5 induced this witness to move towards the window and
- 6 identify a suspect who just happened to be standing next
- 7 to a police officer.
- 8 If the concern under due process in this
- 9 area has been a deterrence rationale, which this Court
- 10 has stated in both Neil v. Biggers and in Manson v.
- 11 Brathwaite, that must be the guiding principle.
- 12 JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, it's both; right,
- 13 General Delaney? I mean, the Court has certainly talked
- 14 about deterrence, but the Court also has very
- 15 substantial discussions in all of these opinions about
- 16 reliability. And from the criminal defendant's point of
- 17 view, it doesn't really much matter whether the
- 18 unreliability is caused by police conduct or by
- 19 something else.
- 20 So -- so tell me a little bit why you think
- 21 the police conduct here, you know, that has to be there
- in every case?
- 23 MR. DELANEY: That is true, Justice Kagan,
- 24 that -- that the opinions have discussed both issues.
- 25 And I would offer two considerations. First, to the

- 1 extent that the courts have talked about reliability as
- 2 the linchpin or the likelihood of misidentification
- 3 playing a role, they have only done that read in context
- 4 within and only after an unnecessarily suggestive
- 5 circumstance that they had applied.
- 6 JUSTICE KAGAN: It seems that that's not
- 7 right. I mean, the reason we want to deter this conduct
- 8 is because the conduct results in misidentifications and
- 9 unreliable testimony. That's the reason that deterrence
- 10 is an important goal, is because this conduct leads to
- 11 unreliable testimony.
- MR. DELANEY: That is correct, and if we
- 13 expand that out and we apply that rationale to the
- 14 circumstances of a case not involving police activity,
- 15 we lose that deterrence rationale. There is no
- 16 deterrence involved in a suggestive circumstance that
- 17 does not involve the police. Civilians are not going to
- 18 be repeat players in this system.
- 19 JUSTICE KENNEDY: And what you're -- what
- 20 you're saying, I take it, in the answer to Justice
- 21 Kagan, was that there is really a two-part step. First,
- 22 was the police procedure unnecessarily suggestive? And
- 23 then if it was, are there other reliability -- was
- 24 reliability impaired?
- So you go -- you ask both questions.

- 1 MR. DELANEY: And that is the Biggers test.
- 2 And if we looked at reliability further as sort of the
- 3 touchstone of our due process inquiry, we would need to
- 4 misplace completely the role of examining whether the
- 5 suggestive circumstances are unnecessary. An -- an
- 6 inquiry into necessity only makes sense in the context
- 7 of a police investigation or police work. And if we
- 8 look at Stovall, certainly there is an example of a case
- 9 that was a show-up, where this Court said that, despite
- 10 the clearly suggestive circumstances, that show-up was
- 11 imperative and necessary because the witness may have
- 12 been about to die.
- The Court did not conduct a reliability
- 14 analysis. So if reliability is the linchpin, it puts
- 15 the Stovall holding in question and really Stovall would
- 16 be undermined.
- 17 JUSTICE ALITO: What you're saying -- what
- 18 you're saying seems to suggest that the rule we're
- 19 talking about here is really not an aspect of due
- 20 process per se, but, like the Fourth Amendment
- 21 exclusionary rule, it's a special due process
- 22 exclusionary rule that is meant to deter conduct that
- 23 could result in a constitutional violation.
- Is that right?
- MR. DELANEY: I -- I think that's correct,

- 1 Justice Alito. And the analogy I would use would be to
- 2 your perjury cases. In Mooney you have clearly set a
- 3 due process standard that prevents police or prosecutors
- 4 from knowingly using false evidence. And the concern
- 5 there is how the police will skew the fact-finding
- 6 process. Stovall and the identification cases are very
- 7 similar to that.
- 8 Our concern in essence is that the police
- 9 through unnecessary suggestion in that circumstance are
- 10 going to skew the fact-finding process and in this
- 11 instance, in essence, create a false or altered memory.
- 12 JUSTICE ALITO: If -- if the exclusionary
- 13 aspect of this is not part of due process itself, then
- 14 doesn't it follow that what due process requires is
- 15 reliability? So doesn't that mean that the Petitioner's
- 16 argument is correct, the due process standard is simply
- 17 reliability, not suggestiveness?
- MR. DELANEY: It's -- the standard is not
- 19 reliability, Justice Alito. The standard for due
- 20 process in this area is the use of orchestrated police
- 21 suggestion.
- 22 JUSTICE KENNEDY: What -- what about cases
- 23 with inflammatory evidence, too many lurid photos or
- 24 testimony that ignites prejudice in the community?
- 25 That's -- that's a -- that's reliability.

- 1 MR. DELANEY: That is, and we have both
- 2 constitutional and non-constitutional tools and
- 3 procedures right now to address that. At the base, we
- 4 require prosecutors under Jackson v. Virginia to have
- 5 some minimum level of evidence so that a rational trier
- 6 of fact can establish guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.
- Above that, under the Sixth Amendment, we
- 8 provide tools and procedures that allow a defendant to
- 9 assess the reliability of evidence through
- 10 cross-examination and summation and the right to
- 11 counsel. And beyond that, we have non-constitutional
- 12 sources under the Rules of Evidence that are
- 13 specifically designed to assess the relevance and the
- 14 reliability of the evidence. But if we go before that
- 15 and say that the Due Process Clause after all that has
- 16 some additional standing in -- in your jurisprudence to
- 17 assess reliability, we really have gone to a very
- 18 different place.
- 19 JUSTICE ALITO: You -- you have two cases.
- 20 You have Mr. Perry's case and you have another case
- 21 that's very similar. In fact, it's identical, except
- 22 that in that instance the police officer talking to the
- 23 witness said, would you take a look out the window and
- 24 see if you recognize anybody.
- Now, from the perspective of the defendants,

- 1 the cases are -- seem -- as far as whether they get a
- 2 fair trial, the cases are identical, are they not? The
- 3 evidence is the same. The suggestiveness is the same.
- 4 MR DELANEY: No, Justice Alito. Those cases
- 5 are quite different. And to the extent we did have
- 6 objective evidence that the police here had in some way
- 7 brought that woman to the window to, in essence, conduct
- 8 a show-up, then we may have triggered the first prong of
- 9 Biggers. And the court would then be required to do two
- 10 things: First, to determine whether the circumstances
- 11 were suggestive; and independent of that, also determine
- 12 whether it was necessary or not, depending on the
- 13 circumstances of the investigation.
- 14 So if in fact the police officer had
- 15 directed the witness to the window, there may be at
- 16 least grounds for the Biggers and Manson analysis to
- 17 come into play. These facts are very different from
- 18 that.
- 19 JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, I'm not sure you
- 20 answered Justice Alito's questions about why there
- 21 should be this difference between these two cases. Now
- 22 you might want to say that where police conduct is
- 23 involved, the chances of unreliable identification are
- 24 greater. Or you may want to say something else. But
- 25 the question is: If we are focused on reliability, why

- 1 are those two cases any different?
- MR. DELANEY: Well, if we do look back to
- 3 determine whether the circumstances involving the police
- 4 are any more -- of more serious concern, if we look back
- 5 to Wade, this Court did talk about the unique role of
- 6 police suggestion in this context of confrontations.
- 7 And it specifically focused on the manner and the degree
- 8 of suggestion in which the manner that police or
- 9 prosecution present a witness, presents a witness to a
- 10 suspect, what impact that can have.
- 11 That unique aspect of police suggestibility,
- 12 the fact that a police officer when it brings someone
- 13 forward is going to influence a witness to a high
- 14 degree, does play a role and is the grounds upon which
- 15 the Stovall cases have been built.
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So tell me -- they gave
- 17 the hypothetical of the police pointing out the
- 18 defendant out the window. But earlier you said it might
- 19 be a different case if the defendant was two blocks away
- 20 and they brought him back. Same scenario. They do
- 21 that, bring him back two blocks; make him stand at the
- 22 scene of the crime; and go upstairs, talk to the woman
- 23 and she spontaneously says: It's the guy standing over
- 24 there. That would entitle the defendant to a Wade
- 25 motion? To a Wade hearing?

- 1 MR. DELANEY: You would look at the
- 2 totality of the circumstances. And to the extent from
- 3 an objective standpoint it could be demonstrated that
- 4 the police intentionally brought that witness back to
- 5 the scene --
- 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: We are now -- we are now
- 7 at mens rea again. So what has surprised me about this
- 8 case is in some ways the way the State court wrote this.
- 9 Because if the State court had simply said something
- 10 like, there was no unnecessary show-up here, they were
- 11 just holding someone until they could figure out what
- 12 happened, there was no suggestiveness by the police,
- 13 because the woman pointed out the window, throw out the
- 14 motion, we wouldn't be here. The argument has become
- 15 something else now because you're trying to define a
- 16 level of intent on the part of the police to create
- 17 unreliability that I think just complicates the inquiry.
- 18 MR. DELANEY: And I -- and, Justice
- 19 Sotomayor, I'm not trying to create that complication.
- 20 And in fact, I would -- I would reference the State
- 21 court decision a little bit differently. It did ground
- 22 its holding specifically in a finding that there were no
- 23 sort of suggestive techniques at play here and no
- 24 inducement. The trial court order very specifically
- 25 said it disagrees with the show-up characterization,

- 1 that the witness had pointed out the Petitioner without
- 2 any inducement from the police officer. The officer did
- 3 not direct the witness's attention to the window, and
- 4 the officer did not ask whether a man in the parking lot
- 5 was the man who broke into the cars. On those facts,
- 6 that can dispose of this case without getting into the
- 7 issue of mens rea.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, what's happened is
- 9 that your briefing and your counter's briefing is
- 10 broader than I think needs to be on the facts of this
- 11 case. But putting that aside, you've addressed this as
- 12 the need for police manipulation. If you define it that
- 13 way, then we do get into a mens rea discussion rather
- 14 than what I think Biggers and Wade were about, which is
- 15 are the circumstances created by the police
- 16 unnecessarily suggestive.
- 17 MR. DELANEY: Yes. And I agree with you
- 18 that the inquiry under the -- under the first prong of
- 19 Biggers is just that. It's an objective inquiry based
- 20 on the totality of the circumstances.
- If there are no further questions, because
- 22 the defendant's conviction was the product of a fair
- 23 trial, because the State court properly applied this
- 24 Court's jurisprudence and precedent in the area of
- 25 eyewitness identification, and because the Petitioner's

- 1 proposed rule would markedly expand this Court's due
- 2 process jurisdiction, we respectfully request that the
- 3 State court judgment be affirmed.
- 4 Thank you.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- 6 Ms. Saharsky.
- 7 ORAL ARGUMENT OF NICOLE A. SAHARSKY
- 8 ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES,
- 9 AS AMICUS CURIAE, SUPPORTING THE RESPONDENT
- 10 MS. SAHARSKY: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
- 11 please the Court:
- 12 A due process inquiry is required only when
- 13 there is a police-arranged confrontation in order to
- 14 obtain an identification and then the police
- 15 unnecessarily suggest that a certain suspect is guilty.
- 16 And that's because, as the State has said, the Court's
- 17 central concern in these cases is the State putting a
- 18 thumb on the scales, gaining an unfair advantage. Just
- 19 as, as Justice Scalia said, the State can't create a
- 20 false document and introduce it at trial, it can't
- 21 manipulate someone's memory and then use that evidence
- 22 to prove guilt at trial.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: So do you mean to say,
- 24 Miss Saharsky, that there can never be a due process
- violation from the admission of unreliable evidence?

- 1 Assuming that the State has not created that evidence,
- 2 has not produced that evidence, but the State knows that
- 3 the evidence is unreliable or has a very substantial
- 4 chance of being so, that that can never be a due process
- 5 violation?
- 6 MS. SAHARSKY: I'm saying that's where the
- 7 Court's cases are now. The State can't knowingly
- 8 introduce perjured testimony, but you're not talking
- 9 about perjured, knowingly perjured testimony.
- 10 If the question is just unreliable, the
- 11 Court has said on numerous occasions -- it's rejected
- 12 claims like that and said: The Constitution doesn't
- 13 protect to ensure all evidence is reliable. It provides
- 14 a process by which the court can test reliability
- 15 through cross-examination, confrontation, et cetera.
- 16 The Court has -- And that was in Crawford.
- 17 The Court has also said -- if I can just add
- 18 one more thing -- in the due process context, that where
- 19 the check comes in is in Jackson v. Virginia, that the
- 20 verdict has to have enough evidence to be supported each
- 21 element of the crime beyond a reasonable that a rational
- 22 jury could find it. So that is a due process check.
- 23 But where the Court's cases stand today, the
- 24 Court has not found, so far as we can tell, a case where
- 25 it said that the mere introduction of unreliable

- 1 evidence would isolate the Due Process Clause. And
- 2 every time it's been confronted with a claim like that,
- 3 in Dowling, for example, in Colorado v. Connelly, the
- 4 Court has rejected such a claim.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: I'll give you an extreme
- 6 example. The extreme example is where an identification
- 7 has been produced by torture, but the torture has been
- 8 through a non-State actor. Same answer?
- 9 MS. SAHARSKY: That is an extreme example.
- 10 There are many reasons why, A, the prosecution would
- 11 never introduce that kind of evidence to begin with, and
- 12 B, that there would be other checks on the process in
- 13 addition to the confrontation and cross-examination
- 14 types of things that we talked about.
- There would be a check on the process
- 16 through Brady and Giglio, for example, that if the
- 17 government knew that those were the circumstances of the
- 18 identification, they would have to turn that evidence
- 19 over to the other side. There would also be checks in
- 20 terms of the trial process if the government actually
- 21 put on evidence like that. So it is -- it is very
- 22 unlikely that such a thing would happen.
- We are not saying that the Court has to hold
- in this case that due process could never play a role
- 25 there. But what we are saying here is this is very

- 1 routine, run-of-the-mill evidence. Someone who saw what
- 2 happened and wants to come into court and tell the jury
- 3 that, and as Justice Kennedy noted, you know, what
- 4 Petitioner is asking for here is to take all of those
- 5 away from the jury, really usurping the jury function
- 6 and having these mini trials where the court itself is
- 7 trying to decide reliability.
- 8 JUSTICE KENNEDY: It is interesting. I was
- 9 trying to find a case where some other class of evidence
- 10 was excluded because it's unreliability. And in
- 11 Thompson v. Louisville, as you say, is just insufficient
- 12 evidence, and that's different. Inflammatory evidence
- 13 might be an example.
- 14 MS. SAHARSKY: Yes. I mean, that's
- 15 different because --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Lurid photos or something
- 17 like that.
- MS. SAHARSKY: I mean, there you have, first
- 19 of all, a separate constitutional provision of an
- 20 impartial jury, and have you a direct influence upon the
- 21 jury. So it's not just unreliable evidence being a due
- 22 process problem. You have this separate Sixth Amendment
- 23 protection and then you have it acting directly on the
- 24 jury. So we think that's a different case. In the due
- 25 process context where the Court's cases have really

- 1 focused is on the States tilting the scales, the States
- 2 corrupting the process by knowingly introducing perjured
- 3 testimony, or by for example refusing to disclose
- 4 material exculpatory evidence --
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: I think there were some
- 6 early cases when fingerprint testimony couldn't come in,
- 7 when fingerprint technology was just new. I don't know
- 8 if those were due process or not.
- 9 MS. SAHARSKY: I can't say. I mean, when
- 10 you look at the Court's more current cases though, to
- 11 the extent the Court has heard argument like this
- 12 evidence is too unreliable, we needed a special
- 13 Constitutional rule. For example, in Ventris, with
- 14 respect to jail house snitches, the Court rejected that
- 15 argument. When the Court was told in Colorado v.
- 16 Connelly there were concerns about reliability. It
- 17 said: No, reliability is up to the jury, and it uses
- 18 the State rules of evidence, and this court's not going
- 19 to be a rule-making organ for rules of procedure. The
- 20 Constitution puts in place the various checks on the
- 21 process: Compulsory process, cross-examination, et
- 22 cetera. And then outside of that, it's really the role
- of the States to mold the trial process.
- JUSTICE ALITO: I was intrigued by what your
- 25 brief said about Federal Rule of Evidence 403. Do you

- 1 think that a Federal judge under that rule may exclude
- 2 the testimony of a witness on the ground that the
- 3 witness is, in the judgment of the trial judge,
- 4 completely unbelievable?
- 5 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, I mean you would need
- 6 to meet the standard of Rule 403 which is that the --
- 7 the probative value of the witness would be
- 8 substantially outweighed by unfair prejudice. I think
- 9 it is unlikely that evidence would -- of an eyewitness,
- 10 which the Court has said, particularly in cases like
- 11 Biggers and Manson, is fairly probative, important
- 12 evidence; the Court wanted to let it in, even in the
- 13 circumstances if where you know, the police played a
- 14 role in manipulation. So probably no, the Court
- 15 wouldn't -- wouldn't take the --
- 16 JUSTICE ALITO: But you think in theory that
- 17 could be done? So if you put on a cooperating witness
- 18 in the case and this witness has made 100 inconsistent
- 19 statements previously and has been convicted of perjury,
- 20 that the judge can just say you can't put that witness
- 21 on because that person is -- is a liar, and I'm not
- 22 going to have the witness testify in my courtroom?
- MS. SAHARSKY: Well, I mean Rule 403 isn't
- 24 talking about whether evidence is true or false. It's
- 25 talking about unfair prejudice to the jury, unfair

- 1 prejudice being -- outweighing the probative value of
- 2 the testimony. So you know, I think it would be a --
- 3 call for the judge in that individual case. I don't
- 4 know that that -- that that kind of argument has been
- 5 made very often.
- 6 But it's not just that trial protection;
- 7 there are numerous trial protections outside of the
- 8 constitutional limits that the States have put into
- 9 place specifically with respect to eyewitness
- 10 identification testimony. For example, there are
- 11 special jury instructions that most States use, and New
- 12 Hampshire used special jury instructions here. And
- 13 there is something that's really notable about these
- 14 instructions, which is that what Petitioner wants is
- 15 when the jury has made a determination here, looking at
- 16 factors like how far was the witness away from the
- 17 person, how long was it before -- between the crime and
- 18 when she made the identification -- the jury heard all
- 19 of those factors, heard argument on it, was instructed
- 20 on those things and it made a determination; and what
- 21 Petitioner wants is for a trial court -- this Court,
- 22 after the fact -- to use those exact same factors and
- 23 come to a different conclusion.
- 24 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Was -- was the Daubert
- 25 case our expert witness case where you have to have a

- 1 threshold showing? Was that due process or was that
- 2 just -- that was just rule of evidence.
- 3 MS. SAHARSKY: Yes, it was just interpreting
- 4 rule of evidence 70 -- 702. So you know, at the end of
- 5 the day what -- what Petitioner is really asking for is
- 6 not some kind of threshold inquiry, but really taking
- 7 the question of reliability away from the jury, and it
- 8 would be a very big change in our system. And --
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, we --
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- that already follow
- 11 your adversary rules. I think it's not just one or two.
- 12 It's about five or six.
- The floodgates open there? How many -- how
- 14 many suppressions of witness identification has occurred
- 15 in those circuits?
- 16 MS. SAHARSKY: It is not many, but the
- 17 principle the Petitioner is arguing for is a significant
- 18 one. It is that the Due Process Clause protects
- 19 against -- protects reliability, and I assure you that
- 20 once this Court says that this is the case, that there
- 21 will be defendants throughout the United States making
- 22 arguments about all different kinds of evidence not
- 23 involving the police being unreliable, and that that all
- 24 needs to be taken away for -- from the jury, and --
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, suppose the --

- 1 lie detectors, for example, that's been taken away from
- 2 the jury on a categorical basis, right?
- 3 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, there are some State
- 4 rules of evidence that do that, but I mean, we are
- 5 talking about as a matter of due process that it is
- 6 fundamentally unfair at trial to not allow -- this --
- 7 to -- this evidence if given to the trial would be
- 8 fundamentally unfair. And you know, the Constitution
- 9 has enshrined the jury as the fundamental guarantee --
- 10 the fundamental protector of liberty; and to think that
- 11 that same Constitution through the Due Process Clause
- 12 means that run-of-the-mill evidence has to be taken away
- 13 from the juries, that the trial court can itself look at
- 14 factors like how good of a view the person had?
- 15 JUSTICE ALITO: There surely is some minimal
- 16 due process requirement for the admission of evidence,
- 17 isn't there? Are you saying there is none? If the
- 18 State abolished the hearsay rule, could it -- would it
- 19 not be a violation of due process if the prosecution
- 20 introduced quadruple hearsay?
- MS. SAHARSKY: Well, I think that there
- 22 would initially be a problem with respect to the
- 23 Confrontation Clause and the court would probably go
- 24 through the analysis that way. We are not saying that
- 25 the court --

- 1 JUSTICE ALITO: Let me give -- you're right.
- 2 Let me give you another example. Let's say you have
- 3 -- the State puts on a witness who -- who says this
- 4 person did it because I saw it in my crystal ball.
- 5 MS. SAHARSKY: Right. And I think that the
- 6 answer that I would give is the same one to the question
- 7 Justice Kagan asked, which is where the Court is now,
- 8 the Court has never that the introduction of some kind
- 9 of evidence is so unreliable it'd violate due process.
- 10 In Dowling, for example, it had evidence that --
- 11 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Is tea leaf reading okay?
- MS. SAHARSKY: What I'm saying is the Court
- 13 doesn't need to address that question here. It also
- 14 doesn't need to foreclose it. But this is very
- 15 run-of-the-mill evidence. But it doesn't mean that the
- 16 Court could never find that some kind of evidence is so
- 17 problematic that the Due Process Clause could preclude
- 18 its admission, but what we're talking about here is
- 19 fairly run-of-the-mill evidence.
- 20 I would just point the Court to the decision
- 21 in Dowling which was about a prior conviction for which
- the person had been acquitted; and then that evidence
- 23 was let in at his trial, and he said that's a problem.
- 24 That evidence is too unreliable and too prejudicial, and
- 25 the Court said that's not for the Due Process Clause.

- 1 The Constitution gives you the process to test evidence.
- 2 It doesn't ensure that all of the evidence that's going
- 3 be introduced be reliable. And that's what Petitioner
- 4 is saying here today, and that would be a very expansive
- 5 view of the Due Process Clause that just can't be
- 6 reconciled with cases like Dowling and Colorado v.
- 7 Connelly.
- If the Court has no further questions we'd
- 9 submit that the judgment of the court below should be
- 10 affirmed.
- 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- Mr. Guerriero, you have 2 minutes remaining.
- 13 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF RICHARD GUERRIERO
- 14 ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
- 15 MR. GUERRIERO: I will try to make three
- 16 points in those 2 minutes.
- 17 I would ask the Court to consider the
- 18 circumstances that would be excluded if the Court
- 19 accepts the rule proposed by the State, that there has
- 20 to be some intentional manipulation or intentional
- 21 orchestration. Suppose that rather than the accidental
- or happenstance show-up we had here, suppose that the
- 23 accident was in the line-up at the police station, and
- 24 the police were completely in good faith, getting to the
- 25 mental state issue, but in spite of their good faith

- 1 there was suggestion in the line-up. Would the trial
- 2 court look at that and say even though this was a
- 3 suggestive line-up we are not going to consider a due
- 4 process claim because it wasn't intentional or
- 5 deliberate manipulation? We would suggest that that
- 6 would be contrary to the principle that the primary evil
- 7 is the risk of misidentification.
- 8 Consider another circumstance. Suppose
- 9 there are two witnesses at the police station, and in
- 10 spite of the best efforts and good rules of the police,
- 11 witness one looks at the line-up and then -- or looks at
- 12 the photo line-up so that they can't be changed, let's
- 13 say, and leaves the line-up and somehow communicates to
- 14 witness two, I picked the one on the bottom at the
- 15 right. I think that's the one. That suggestion would
- 16 be very powerful from the person who experienced the
- 17 very same crime.
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: Tell that to the jury.
- 19 What jury isn't going to be -- I mean the more
- 20 persuasive your argument is, the more likely it is that
- 21 a jury will take care of that.
- MR. GUERRIERO: The problem is that the
- 23 witnesses who have -- are under the suggestive influence
- 24 actually believed what they are testifying to, and
- 25 the -- that's why the Court said in Wade

- 1 cross-examination for this one kind of evidence -- not
- 2 floodgates, but this one kind of evidence,
- 3 cross-examination may not always be enough. The
- 4 witness's sincerity has a powerful effect on the jury.
- 5 The last point I want to make is this is not
- 6 going to open the floodgates, as we say, or create a
- 7 slew of new claims. Under the Watkins case this Court
- 8 knows that there -- there is not even required to have a
- 9 separate hearing on this evidence, and the reason a
- 10 separate hearing isn't required is because these issues
- 11 would be fleshed out in front of the jury.
- 12 This is only a question of what legal
- 13 standard applies when the judge hears the defendant's
- 14 objection that this violates due process, there is a --
- 15 there is a substantial likelihood of misidentification.
- 16 So it's not any new claims. It's not any separate
- 17 hearings. It's simply a question of what exactly is the
- 18 due process rule.
- 19 Thank you.
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- 21 The case is submitted.
- 22 (Whereupon, at 10:58 a.m., the case in the
- 23 above-entitled matter was submitted.)

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